

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

UNCLAS USNATO 1644

SECDEF FOR ASD/PA ROSS

EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: NATO OVIP (SECDEF BROWN)
SUBJ: EUROPEAN VISIT OF SECDEF BROWN--REPORTS OF AWACS-TANK
GUN LINKAGE

1. WE WISH TO CALL ATTENTION TO REPORTS DURING THE PAST TWO
DAYS WHICH STRONGLY IMPLY THAT GERMAN PARTICIPATION IN A
MARCH 25 NATO DPC MINISTERIAL MEETING ON AN AEWS IS LINKED
TO A US-GERMAN AGREEMENT ON THE TANK GUN FOR THE NEW US XM-1
TANK. ITEMS IN DIE WELT, FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG,
AND AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, REPORT THAT THE US HAS AGREED TO
CHOOSE THE GERMAN TANK GUN FOR ITS XM-1.

A. DIE WELT OF HAMBURG, MAR 23 (PAGE 1) UNDER HEADLINE
QUOTE WITH GERMAN CANNON END QUOTE: THE NEWLY DEVELOPED
US TANK XM-1, THE COMPETITOR OF THE GERMAN LEOPART II, IS
SUPPOSED TO BE EQUIPPED WITH THE GERMAN 120 MILLIMETER
CANNON. THIS WAS AGREED BETWEEN GERMAN DEFENSE MINISTER
GEORG LEBER AND HIS AMERICAN COLLEAGUE HAROLD BROWN.
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B. FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG OF FRANKFURT, MAR 23
(PAGE 2) UNDER HEADLINE QUOTE: NEW AMERICAN TANK SUPPOSED
TO GET GERMAN CANNON END QUOTE.: QUOTE: FRANKFURT,
22 MARCH-THE AMERICAN COMPETITOR TO THE GERMAN LEOPARD
II TANK, THE XM-1, IS SUPPOSED TO BE EQUIPPED WITH A
GERMAN 120 CANNON, ACCORDING TO PENTAGON SOURCES IN
WASHINGTON. ACCORDING TO REPORTS IN WASHINGTON, THIS WAS
AGREED AT THE MEETING LAST WEEK BETWEEN GERMAN DEFENSE
MINISTER LEBER AND US DEFENSE MINISTER BROWN. THE GERMAN
CANNON IS THUS GETTING PREFERENCE OVER THE ENGLISH (120

MILLIMETER) CANNON AND IS TO BE BUILT IN THE US WITHOUT ANY LICENSE AGREEMENT. IN THIS CONNECTION THERE IS SPECULATION THAT THE PARTICIPATION OF MR. BROWN IN THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE DPC IN BRUSSELS AT THE WEEKEND IS LINKED TO THE PURCHASE OF THE AWACS SYSTEM..UNOFFICIAL SOURCES IN BONN SEVERAL WEEKS AGO SPOKE OF A 'LINK' BETWEEN GERMAN-AMERICAN COOPERATION ON THE TANK AND EUROPEAN PURCHASE OF THE AMERICAN AWACS SYSTEM, WHICH WOULD BE A SIGNIFICANT GAIN FOR AMERICA'S EXPORTS.

C. AGENCE FRANCE PRESS; MAR 22: QUOTE:THE WEST GERMAN VERSION OF THE 120 MILLIMETER GUN WILL BE CHOSEN IN PREFERENCE TO ITS BRITISH EQUIVALENT TO EQUIP THE NEW TANKS OF THE AMERICAN ARMY, IT WAS LEARNED MONDAY NIGHT FROM A WELL-INFORMED PENTAGON SOURCE. FROM THE SAME SOURCE, ONE LEARNED THAT THIS GUN WILL BE MANUFACTURED UNDER LICENSE TO THE US, AND THAT THIS AGREEMENT TOOK PLACE AT THE END OF THE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN SECRETARY OF DEFENSE HAROLD BROWN AND WEST GERMAN MINISTER GEORG LEBER. END QUOTE.

2. ARMED FORCES NETWORK (AFN) OUT OF FRANKFURT, WITHOUT CITING SOURCE, REPORTED THIS MORNING THAT WEST GERMAN AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN AWACS, IF GIVEN FRIDAY, WOULD BE PART OF A DEAL MADE BETWEEN DEFENSE MINISTER LEBER AND SECRETARY BROWN TO EQUIP XM-1 WITH GERMAN 120 MM GUN.

3. AN AP WASHINGTON DATE-LINE DESPATCH OF MARCH 22 STATED, UNCLASSIFIED

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HOWEVER, THAT THE DPC MINISTERIAL MEETING QUOTE: WAS CLEARED LAST WEEK WHEN BROWN AND WEST GERMAN DEFMIN GEORG LEBER ELIMINATED UNCERTAINTIES OVER WHETHER A GERMAN 120MM GUN AND OTHER COMPONENTS WOULD RECEIVE FAIR CONSIDERATION FOR INCORPORATION INTO A NEW US ARMY TANK. GERMANY REPORTEDLY WAS RELUCTANT TO APPROVE THE NATO MEETING UNTIL IT RECEIVED SUCH ASSURANCES FROM BROWN. END QUOTE.

4. ON THE SAME SUBJECT, A UPI ITEM TODAY REPORTED THAT QUOTE: THE WAY FOR THE MINISTERIAL MEETING WAS CLEARED LAST WEEK DURING A VISIT TO WASHINGTON BY GERMAN DEFENSE MINISTER GEORG LEBER. BROWN AND LEBER DISCUSSED THE QUESTION OF WHETHER A WEST GERMAN GUN WOULD BE USED ABOARD THE NEW AMERICAN XM-1 BATTLE TANK, BUT NO RESOLUTION WAS MADE. END QUOTE.

5. WE BELIEVE THAT IN ANY MEETINGS WITH SECRETARY BROWN, MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES ARE LIKELY TO QUESTIONS ABOUT LINKAGE BETWEEN A US-GERMAN AGREEMENT ON THE TANK GUN FOR THE XM-1 AND GERMAN PARTICIPATION AND SUPPORT FOR A NATO AWACS AT DPC MINISTERIAL.STRAUSZ-HUPE

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